

Message Text

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64

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2051

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 14667

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGSC PDIP, CE, IN, PFOR

SUBJ: NEW INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO SRI LANKA: GURBACHAN
SINGH

REF: COLOMBO 3489

1. THE NEW INDIAN HICOMM TO SRI LANKA, GURBACHAN SINGH, AGE 53, ENTERED THE FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1949 AND HAS SERVED PREVIOUSLY AS AMBASSADOR TO MOROCCO AND HICOMM IN KENYA. HIS MOST RECENT POSITION WAS JOINT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIA AND NORTHERN DIVISION (BHUTAN, SIKKIM, NEPAL) AND MEA (SINCE MID-1975). HE IS A SIKH, MARRIED (SHAMA MAIRA) AND HAS THREE GROWN CHILDREN. WE HAVE NOT GOTTEN TO KNOW HIM WELL IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS BUT HAVE FOUND HIM FRIENDLY AND WELL-DISPOSED ALTHOUGH NOT VERY FORTHCOMING ON THE SUBJECTS UNDER HIS WING, PARTICULARLY CHINA AND INDIA'S NORTHERN NEIGHBORS.

2. AFTER INITIAL POSTINGS IN WASHINGTON, BANGKOK AND IN NEW DELHI DURING THE EARLY 1950'S, SINGH SERVED AS PRIVATE SECRETARY AND POLITICAL OFFICER IN LONDON (1956-70), FIRST SECRETARY IN LAGOS (1961-63), AND COUNSELOR IN PARIS (1967-69-- AFTER A TWO YEAR TINT BACK IN MEA), BEFORE BEING POSTED TO MOROCCO IN 1969. HE ATTENDED THE ISLAMIC SUMIT IN RABAT IN 1969 FOR A BRIEF TIME AS INDIAN REPRESENTATIVE
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BUT WHEN THE INVITATION WAS WITHDRAWN AS A RESULT OF

PAKISTANI PRESSURE, THE FULL INDIAN DELEGATION LED BY
FAKHRUDIN ALI AHMED WAS NOT ALLOWED TO ATTEND AND THE
GOI WITHDREW GURBACHAN SINGH FROM RABAT IN PROTEST. HE
WAS SENT TO KENYA IN 1970 AND IN 1972 BECAME A JOINT
SECRETARY IN THE CABINET SECRETARIAT IN DELHI FROM WHERE
HE WAS POSTED IN 1974 TO BECOME INDIAN POLITICAL
OFFICER IN SIKKIM.

3. COMMENT: WE ALSO DO NOT YET KNOW WHAT HAPPENDED TO THE
EARLIER GOI INTENTION OF APPOINTING AVTAR SINGH TO SRI LANKA.
SAXBE

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Message Attributes

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